

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 LAGOS 03785 241619Z

43

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 PA-01 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 EUR-12 /030 W

----- 030056

R 241228Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8961

INFO USIA WASHDC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LAGOS 3785

FOR AF AND AMBASSADOR EASUM

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, NI

SUBJECT: STATUS REPORT ON SECOND WORLD BLACK AND AFRICAN FESTIVAL OF
ARTS AND CULTURE (FESTAC)

SUMMARY: DESPITE MANY INDICATIONS THAT CONSTRUCTION OF HOUSING AND OTHER VITAL FESTAC FACILITIES CANNOT BE COMPLETED BEFORE ITS OPENING, IT SEEMS PROBABLE THAT THE FESTIVAL WILL BE HELD FROM NOVEMBER 22 - DECEMBER 20, 1975 AS SCHEDULED. INACTION BY PRIVATE U.S. CITIZENS HEADING THE NORTH AMERICAN ZONAL COMMITTEE JEOPARDIZES U.S. FESTAC PARTICIPATION. LACK OF ANY U.S. REPRESENTATION OR REPRESENTATION OF LOW QUALITY WOULD BE INTERPRETED BY NIGERIANS AS A CALCULATED AFFRONT AND PROBABLY BE VIEWED BY MANY AFRICANS AS "EVIDENCE" OF A "CHRONIC" U.S. DISINTEREST IN AFRICA; PRIVATE BLACK AMERICANS VISITING HERE INDICATE THAT, REGARDLESS OF THE JUSTIFICATION, A POOR U.S. SHOWING WOULD DRAW STRONG DOMESTIC CRITICISM OF THE USG. THEREFORE, MISSION BELIEVES THAT CONTINGENCY PLANNING BY THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN IMMEDIATELY WHICH PROBABLY WILL REQUIRE EARLY IMPLEMENTATION.

1. LATEST AVAILABLE INFORMATION INDICATES IT UNLIKELY THAT MANY NEW HOUSING FACILITIES UNDER CONSTRUCTION TO ACCOMMODATE 100,000 VISITORS TO FESTAC (FESTAC ESTIMATE) WILL BE OPERATIVE BY NOVEMBER. ALTHOUGH A NEW FLEET OF BUSES TO PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION FOR FESTAC
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 LAGOS 03785 241619Z

PARTICIPANTS AND SPECTATORS MAY ARRIVE IN TIME, IT IS DIFFICULT TO

FORESEE HOW RELATED TRANSPORTATION REQUIREMENTS SUCH AS DECONGESTION OF AIRPORT AND PORT FACILITIES CAN BE MET SATISFACTORILY. THE FESTIVAL THEATER, LAGOS RACECOURSE CONVERSION AND OTHER FACILITIES ARE PROCEEDING WELL, DESPITE DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS DUE LARGELY TO PORT CONGESTION. INDICATIONS ARE THAT THE FMG IS DETERMINED THAT ADEQUATE HOUSING FACILITIES WILL BE AVAILABLE IN TIME AND IS PREPARED TO PAY VIRTUALLY ANY PRICE NECESSARY FOR THAT PURPOSE. SUGGESTIONS ARE BEGINNING TO SURFACE THAT LINERS MAY BE BROUGHT INTO LAGOS HARBOR FOR SUPPLEMENTAL HOUSING DURING FESTAC. COMMENT: THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT IT APPEARED MOST UNLIKELY THAT MINIMAL LOGISTICAL PREPARATIONS FOR THE SECOND ALL-AFRICAN GAMES, HELD IN LAGOS IN DECEMBER 1973, COULD BE COMPLETED IN TIME. YET THEY WERE. NOW THE FMG HAS MUCH GREATER RESOURCES TO DEVOTE TO FESTAC; ONE THE OTHER HAND, IT IS A MUCH MORE AMBITIOUS PROJECT. SINCE A) LITTLE PROMOTION OF FESTAC HAS BEEN DONE OUTSIDE OF NIGERIA THUS FAR, B) HIGH TRANSPORTATION, LODGING AND FOOD COSTS ARE LIKELY TO BE PROHIBITIVELY EXPENSIVE FOR MANY WOULD-BE SPECTATORS, AND C) REPORTS OF CONGESTION AND INFLATED PRICES IN LAGOS PRESENTLY DISCOURAGE TOURISTS, IT SEEMS DOUBTFUL THAT THE NUMBER OF FESTAC VISITORS WILL APPROACH THE FMG'S 100,000 ESTIMATE, THUS EASING REQUIREMENTS.

2. REGARDING SUBSTANTIVE FESTAC PARTICIPATION, MOST COUNTRIES CONCERNED REPORTEDLY HAVE THEIR PREPARATIONS IN HAND; ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE BY OFFICIAL OR QUASI-OFFICIAL GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN ALMOST EVERY CASE. EXAMPLE: THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT REPORTEDLY BYPASSED THE NAZ COMMITTEE AND IS ARRANGING ITS PARTICIPATION DIRECTLY WITH FESTAC SECRETARIAT.

3. CONTACTS AT THE FESTAC SECRETARIAT REPORT THAT THE NAZ COMMITTEE MET IN CHICAGO ON APRIL 13 AND ACCEPTED RESIGNATIONS OF DAVIS, FULLER AND DONALDSON AS CHAIRMAN, VICE CHAIRMAN AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RESPECTIVELY. FOLLOWING NEW OFFICERS WERE NAMED: DONALDSON, CHAIRMAN; DAVIS, HONARY CHAIRMAN; MS. ELMER LEWIS, (SPELLING UNCERTAIN) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AND THE FIRM OF ZEBRA ASSOCIATES, INC. WAS GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR FUND RAISING AND PUBLICITY. WE SUGGEST THAT CU CONTACT DONALDSON TO FIND OUT COMMITTEE'S NEW PLANS AND ASSESS ITS NEW STRIPES.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 LAGOS 03785 241619Z

4. BY CHANCE WE LEARNED THAT ARRANGEMENTS MADE BY FESTAC COLLOQUIUM COORDINATOR MVENG AND CAO DURING RECENT U.S. TRIP, WHEREBY FISK UNIVERSITY WAS TO COORDINATE AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN THE COLLOQUIUM, HAVE BEEN ANNULLED. REPORTEDLY DONALDSON CONTACTED DIOP AND REQUESTED THAT ALL COORDINATION BE DONE THROUGH NAZ COMMITTEE. DIOP AGREED BUT FAILED TO INFORM FISK. THUS PRESENT STATUS U.S. PARTICIPATION IN COLLOQUIUM IS UNKNOWN.

5. UNLESS NEW NAZ COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP CAN OVERCOME TOTAL INERTIA THUS FAR SHOWN, WOULD APPEAR THAT U.S. PARTICIPATION IN FESTIVAL IS IN JEOPARDY. IN MISSION'S VIEW, EITHER LACK OF PARTICIPATION OR LESS THAN FIRST-CLASS REPRESENTATION WOULD HAVE HARMFUL EFFECT ON RELATIONS BETWEEN U.S. AND NIGERIA, WHICH WOULD VIEW EITHER AS CALCULATED AFFRONT FROM "WORLD'S SECOND LARGEST BLACK COMMUNITY", AS U.S. OFTEN IS DESCRIBED HERE. BLACK AMERICAN VISITORS HERE HAVE INDICATED THAT THE BLACK COMMUNITY IN THE U.S. WOULD INTERPRET EITHER POSSIBILITY -- REGARDLESS OF THE NATURE OF ITS JUSTIFICATION -- AS "FURTHER EVIDENCE" OF THE U.S.G. DISINTEREST IN AFRICAN AFFAIRS. THE LATTER VIEW DOUBTLESS WOULD BE SHARED BY MANY AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

6. ALTERNATIVES FOR CU AS VIEWED FROM HERE ARE:

- A) LEAVE ALL INITIATIVES TO NAZ COMMITTEE. PROVIDE LIMITED SUPPORT IF REQUESTED.
- B) MEET WITH HOPEFULLY-RESUSCITATED NAZ LEADERSHIP TO EXPRESS U.S.G. CONCERN THAT INADEQUATE REPRESENTATION WOULD HARM U.S.-AFRICAN RELATIONS AND OFFER NAZ SUBSTANTIAL LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AND FUNDING TO ASSURE FIRST-CLASS AMERICAN PARTICIPATION.
- C) IGNORE NAZ COMMITTEE AND DEVELOP DIRECT DIALOGUE THROUGH THE MISSION WITH FESTAC SECRETARIAT.

7. ALTERNATIVE B) SEEMS ONLY COURSE PRACTICABLE IN VIEW OF NIGERIAN AND DOMESTIC U.S. POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SENSITIVITIES. IF TIMING FEASIBLE, REQUEST CU/NAZ MEETING BE SCHEDULED DURING WEEK OF MAY 12 WHEN PAO WILL BE IN WASHINGTON AND COULD ATTEND AS OBSERVER.

8. FYI, CHIEF ANTHONY ENAHORO, FESTAC PRESIDENT, HAS DIRECTLY COMMISSIONED TWO FESTAC PRESENTATIONS FROM THE U.S. THE FIRST, AN EXHIBIT ON BLACK CONTRIBUTION TO SCIENCE, IS BEING PREPARED BY THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE; OUR SOURCES EXPRESS DOUBT THAT THE EXHIBIT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 LAGOS 03785 241619Z

WILL BE FINISHED IN TIME. REPORTEDLY PART OF THE PROBLEM HAS BEEN A DELAY IN ADVANCE PAYMENTS FROM FESTAC; WE UNDERSTAND THIS IS BEING REMEDIED BUT THAT TIMELY COMPLETION OF THE EXHIBIT IS STILL IN DOUBT. HERBERT WILLIAMS OF SPITZ SPACE SYSTEMS, INC., CHADDS FORD, PENNSYLVANIA TOLD THE PAO THAT THE GEODESIC PLANETARIUM ORDERED BY ENAHORO CAN ARRIVE IN TIME; REQUIRED PRE-PAYMENT SEEMS ASSURED BUT NO SITE HAS BEEN SELECTED YET. (NOTE: THE PLANETARIUM WILL BE MOVED TO ZARIA -- PRESUMABLY FOR THE AHMADU BELLO U. CAMPUS -- AFTER FESTAC.)

9. WHENEVER MORE CONCRETE DETAILS REGARDING FESTAC AND U.S. PARTICIPATION IN IT BECOME AVAILABLE, THEY WILL BE REPORTED. A MEETING OF ALL FESTIVAL ZONAL COMMITTEES IS SUPPOSEDLY TO BE HELD IN MAY. HOPEFULLY MANY ASPECTS WILL BE CLARIFIED THEN; MEETING SUPPOSEDLY WOULD BE LAST POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY TO CHANGE FESTAC TIMING.

10. WE EMPHASIZE THAT THERE WILL BE CRITICAL SHORTAGE OF HOUSING
ACCOMMODATIONS DURING FESTAC. PAO BEINGING PROPOSAL TO INSURE
ADEQUATE FACILITIES FOR AMERICAN PERFORMERS.
CROSBY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LAGOS03785
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750144-0709
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750421/aaaaatz.tel
Line Count: 174
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 SEP 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <15 DEC 2003 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STATUS REPORT ON SECOND WORLD BLACK AND AFRICAN FESTIVAL OF ARTS AND CULTURE (FESTAC)
TAGS: OEXC, NI
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006